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MEMORIAL

OF

ONSLOW STEARNS,

CONCORD, N. H.

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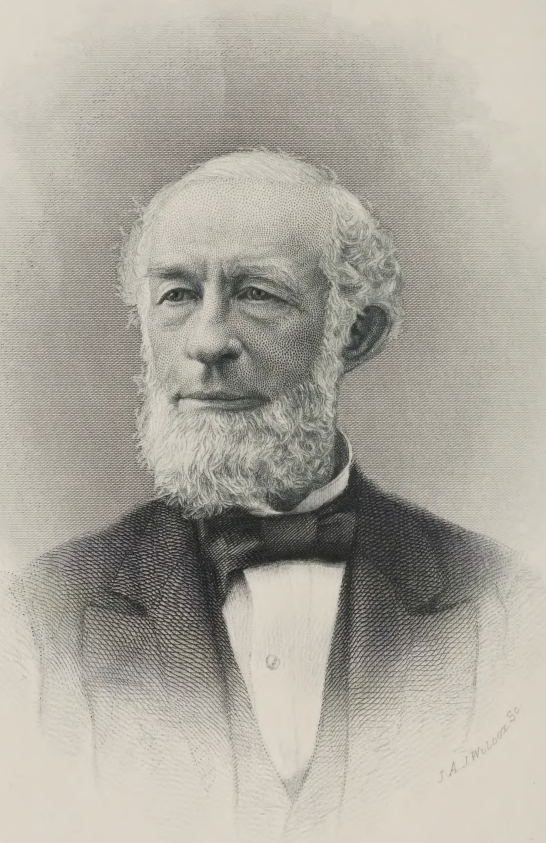

Dunlow Steams

MEMORIAL

OF

ONSLOW STEARNS,

CONCORD, N. H.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Onslow Stearns was born in Billerica, in Middlesex county, Massachusetts, on the thirtieth day of August, eighteen hundred and ten. His father, John Stearns, and his grandfather, Isaac Stearns, were prosperous farmers, and the farm which they owned and cultivated in Billerica is now owned and occupied by Franklin Stearns, an older brother of Onslow.

Isaac Stearns was a well known and influential citizen of Middlesex county, and held various local and state offices, being for some years a member of the executive council. Onslow Stearns remained at home, working on the farm, and receiving the usual education of a district school and country academy till he was seventeen years old, when, in 1827, he went to Boston, and became a clerk in the house of Howe & Holbrook, afterwards J. C. Howe & Co. Here he remained for about three years, when he joined his elder brother, John O. Stearns, in Virginia, and was employed in the engineering department of the construction of the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal till 1833, when he became interested with his brother John in contracts for the construction of various railroads, including, among others, the Philadelphia & Columbia (now part of the Pennsylvania Railroad), the Germantown, the Philadelphia & Trenton, the Philadelphia & Norristown, the Delaware & Atlantic, the Camden & Amboy, the Brooklyn & Jamaica, the Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore, the Elizabethtown & Somerville, and the Baltimore & Ohio railroads.

BURTON HIST. COLLECTION
DETROIT
EXCHANGE DUPLICATE

He was engaged in these enterprises till the summer of 1837, when he returned to New England, and became contractor in the construction of the Charlestown Branch Railroad, which afterwards became a portion of the Fitchburg Railroad, and of the Wilmington & Haverhill Railroad, which is now a portion of the Boston & Maine Railroad. Later in the same year he undertook the completion of the Nashua & Lowell Railroad, then in process of construction from Lowell, Mass., to Nashua, N. H. He was engaged in this work till its completion in the fall of 1838, when he was chosen superintendent of the road, which position he held till July, 1845, when he resigned, and was appointed agent of the Northern Railroad Company of New Hampshire, for the purpose of building its road from Concord to West Lebanon, N. H.

Mr. Stearns was instrumental in obtaining the legislation in New Hampshire, in 1844, under which the Northern Railroad Company, and other railroad corporations which were unable to purchase the land for their roads, were enabled to secure a right of way, by means of a taking of land for that purpose by the state, payment of damages therefor from the state treasury, and a lease of the right of way thus taken by the state to the railroad corporations, they paying therefor the amount of damages previously paid by the state. This course was rendered necessary by the repeal in 1840 of the act giving railroad corporations the power to take land for railroad purposes. The Northern Railroad, together with the branch from Franklin to Bristol, was located and constructed entirely under the personal supervision of Mr. Stearns, and upon its completion he was continued as its manager till May, 1852, when he was chosen president of the company, which position he held till his death, a period of twenty-seven years. He was also general superintendent of the Vermont Central Railroad, from January, 1852, for a period of about three years, during a portion of which time he was also a director in the

Ogdensburgh Railroad, and from 1857 to 1875 he was a director of the Nashua & Lowell Railroad Corporation.

While president of the Northern Railroad Company, Mr. Stearns was also president of the Sullivan, the Contoocook Valley, and the Concord & Claremont railroad companies, which were connected in interest with the Northern Railroad, and under his direction the Concord & Claremont Railroad was extended from Bradford to Claremont, being completed in 1872. The success of Mr. Stearns in the management of these various railroad enterprises caused his services to be sought by those interested in other railroads, and he was frequently solicited to take charge of railroad interests in Massachusetts and other states. These offers he uniformly declined, till July, 1866, when he was induced to take the presidency of the Old Colony & Newport Railway Company, in Massachusetts, which position he held till November, 1877, when he resigned on account of failing health. During this time the Old Colony & Newport Railway Company and the Cape Cod Railroad Company were consolidated under the name of the Old Colony Railroad Company, and the South Shore and Duxbury & Cohasset railroads, with others, were added to it. The Old Colony Steamboat Company was also formed, and purchased the boats of the Narragansett Steamship Company, thus forming, with the Old Colony Railroad, the present Fall River Line between Boston and New York. In 1874, Mr. Stearns was elected president of the Concord Railroad, which, with its branches, forms the centre of the railway system of New Hampshire; and he continued to manage the affairs of this corporation till his death.

The eleven years during which Mr. Stearns was president of the Old Colony Railroad were years of the most intense and constant labor on his part. For two years of the time he was governor of New Hampshire. He was president of the Northern Railroad and the other roads connected with it during all that time, and for three years he was also

president of the Concord Railroad and of the Old Colony Steamboat Company, besides being a director and interested in the management of various other corporations. Mr. Stearns gave an active, personal supervision to all the corporate interests under his charge, embracing not only their general relations with other corporations and interests, but extending to the most minute details of their management. He was never idle. No man was ever more painstaking and faithful in the discharge of his duties. His papers and figures were carried with him, and studied as he journeyed between his home in Concord and the railroad offices in Boston; and when in Boston his labors almost always extended far into the hours of night. He lived in labor, and thought no plan complete till, by execution, it had passed beyond his power to labor upon it. His knowledge of the practical management of railroads was complete and perfect to the smallest details; and this, together with his unwearied industry, sound business judgment and foresight, and his knowledge and control of men, contributed to a success such as few railroad managers have attained. At his death he was the oldest railroad president in continuous service in New England, having been president of the Northern Railroad for twenty-seven years.

From early life Mr. Stearns took a lively interest in public affairs. In his political views he was a Whig, and took an active part in the presidential campaign which resulted in the election of Gen. Harrison in 1840. Later, he became a member of the Republican party, and in 1862 he was chosen a member of the New Hampshire state senate, where he served on the committees on railroads, elections, and military affairs. In 1863 he was reëlected, and was chosen president of the senate. As a legislator, Mr. Stearns was distinguished for the same qualities which made him successful in business. He was sparing in speech, industrious in duty, sound in judgment, practical in his views, and had great influence in the deliberations of the senate. In 1864 he was

a delegate-at-large from New Hampshire to the Republican National Convention at Baltimore, and was one of the vice-presidents of that body. On the 7th of January, 1869, Mr. Stearns was nominated as the Republican candidate for governor of New Hampshire. The nominating convention was a very full one, nearly every town and ward in the state being represented by the entire delegation to which it was entitled, and the nomination was unanimously made by acclamation. He was inaugurated as governor, and delivered his first message to the legislature, June 3, 1869.

Mr. Stearns always took a warm interest in Dartmouth college, and in 1857 it conferred upon him the honorary degree of master of arts. He contributed liberally to its support; and he made his first address as chief magistrate of the state on the occasion of the college centennial in 1869, taking strong ground in favor of such aid by the state as should "make the college permanently effective for the public good."

On the 7th of January, 1870, Mr. Stearns was unanimously renominated as the Republican candidate for governor, but sent a letter to the convention declining the renomination, on account of the state of his health and the pressing claims of business. The convention refused to accept his declination, and appointed a committee to wait upon him and urge him to withdraw it, which he finally did.

The political campaign of 1870 in New Hampshire was exceedingly close and severe, there being four well-supported state tickets in the field, and a majority vote being required to elect; but Mr. Stearns received a handsome majority over the three other candidates, and was qualified for his second term of office in June, 1870. At the close of his service as governor, he delivered a concise address to the legislature, giving a clear statement of the condition of the various state interests. During the two years he was governor, he gave especial attention to the financial interests of the state, and to reforms in the management of the state

prison. The state debt was reduced nearly one third during that time, while the state tax was reduced more than one half. The entire management of the state prison was changed by him, though he met with much opposition from those friends of prison reform whose views differed from his. The result justified the wisdom of his course, for the prison, which was before ill disciplined, expensively managed, and a constant charge to the state, soon became well managed, and produced a satisfactory revenue above its expenses, while the care and condition of its inmates were much improved.

Although strong in his attachment to the principles of his political party, and zealous for its success, Mr. Stearns was always supported by many of his fellow-citizens, who, while differing from him in political views, esteemed and respected him for the purity of his character and the ability and impartiality with which he discharged his official duties. In official station, he knew no party. He was the first Republican governor of New Hampshire who nominated a Democrat to a position on the bench; and his nomination of Hon. Harry Hibbard, one of the most prominent Democrats in the state, as justice of the supreme judicial court, in 1870, though opposed by many ardent Republicans at the time, has since been recognized as one of the wisest of his official acts.

As chief magistrate of the state, Mr. Stearns displayed the same close attention to details and sound practical sense that he manifested in private business. No interest of the state failed to receive his patient and careful study. The reports and affairs of the various state departments were examined by him for a series of years, and all his recommendations to the legislature were the result of accurate knowledge, and not of mere general impressions.

In his social and family relations, Mr. Stearns was specially happy. He married Mary A. Holbrook, daughter of Hon. Adin Holbrook, of Lowell, Mass., June 26, 1845; and

in 1846 he removed to Concord, N. H., where he purchased an estate on Main street, which he improved to suit his taste and to accommodate his increasing family, and where he lived till his death, December 29, 1878. He had a family of one son and four daughters, all of whom, with their mother, survive him.

In the discharge of all social duties, Mr. Stearns was exceeding faithful, and he never failed fully to perform his part in any work which was for the benefit of his neighborhood or city. At the breaking out of the war for the Union, he took an active part in the raising of men and money for the army, and was one of the originators and officers of the Soldiers' Aid Society of New Hampshire, in the work of which he continued to labor during the entire war, giving liberally of his time and means to its support. He was always a constant attendant upon the services of the Unitarian church, and one of its most liberal supporters. He continued to discharge the duties of president of the Northern Railroad and of the Concord Railroad, and to attend to his large private business, until his last illness, which was of but a few days' duration. His mental capacity and vigor remained unimpaired to the last. He passed quietly away, on the 29th day of December, 1878, surrounded by all his immediate family, except his eldest daughter, who was then on her way from the West.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT.

At a meeting of the directors of the Northern Railroad, held in Boston, January 3, 1879, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That in the recent death of Hon. Onslow Stearns, we feel a great loss to ourselves personally, and to this company. It has terminated the harmonious and pleasant relations, which, for a quarter of a century, have existed between the members of this board and him, as their associate and president; and it has taken from the company a most capable and faithful officer,—one whose long-continued services for its interests, and whose well known industry, honesty, and economy in the management of its affairs will be gratefully remembered by its stockholders. The courage and persistency with which, despite the weakness and pain of disease, and against the fears of friends, he continued attention to the cares and duties of his position up to his latest days, were in full consistency with the spirit and fidelity which characterized his whole life.

Resolved, That this testimonial be placed upon the records of the corporation, and that the clerk be directed to transmit a copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

At a meeting of the directors of the Concord Railroad, held January 10, 1879, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the members of this board express their deep regret at the death of their president and associate, Hon. Onslow Stearns and place upon the record their appreciation of the courtesy which characterized his official relations, and their high respect for the integrity, fidelity, and signal success with which he performed the many important duties entrusted to his charge.

Resolved, That the clerk be instructed to furnish a copy of these resolutions to the family of the deceased.

At a special meeting of the directors of the Old Colony Railroad Company, held in Boston on Tuesday, the 31st day of December, A. D. 1878, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That this board has heard with sincere sorrow of the death of their associate director and late president, the Hon. Onslow Stearns, and gratefully remember the valuable services he has rendered this company for many years as a director and former president.

Resolved, That this board will attend the funeral of their deceased associate at Concord, N. H., on Thursday next, as an expression of their respect.

Resolved, That the directors respectfully tender to Mrs. Stearns and her family their sympathy in this great affliction, and that the clerk be directed to send to Mrs. Stearns a copy of these resolutions.

At a meeting of the executive committee of the Central Vermont Railroad Line, held in Boston, December 31st, 1878, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That while we recognize in this sad event the inscrutable decrees of Almighty God, we mourn the loss of our esteemed friend and associate; that we cherish with profound respect his labors in the great enterprise which we represent, and his counsels, which were always characterized by thoughtful prudence and eminent integrity; while we also hold in pleasing remembrance his kindly and genial presence and companionship, and the friendship which years of intimacy have only served to strengthen and cement.

Resolved, That we extend to the bereaved family of our departed friend our sincerest condolence and sympathy in this their great affliction.

Resolved, That, as a token of our respect, the clerk of this board be instructed to enter these resolutions upon the records of our meetings, and transmit a copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

FUNERAL SERVICES.

The funeral services were held at Concord on the 2d of January, 1879. The remains were escorted by several hundred workmen from the shops of the Northern and Concord railroads to the Unitarian church, where they were viewed by a large concourse of the people of Concord and adjoining places.

There was a large attendance of public men and prominent railroad officials from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, and other states, including the governor of New Hampshire, members of the executive council, the secretary of state, the president of the senate, and other state officials, together with several members of Mr. Stearns's staff when governor, the mayor and members of the city government of Concord, judges of the supreme court of the state, the judge of the U. S. district court, the directors and officers of the Northern (N. H.), the Concord, the Old Colony, the Central Vermont, the Passumpsic, the Boston, Concord & Montreal, the Manchester & Lawrence, the Concord & Portsmouth, the Boston & Lowell, the Nashua & Worcester, and other railroads.

The pall-bearers were B. F. Prescott, Natt Head, Frederick Smyth, James A. Weston, P. C. Cheney, and Walter Harriman, respectively governor, governor-elect, and ex-governors of New Hampshire. The casket was carried by the

master mechanics and master car-builders of the Northern, Concord, and Old Colony railroads.

The services at the church commenced soon after 12 o'clock. Selections from Scripture were read and prayer was offered by the pastor, Rev. S. C. Beane. The funeral address was delivered by Rev. Augustus Woodbury, of Providence, R. I., a former pastor of the Society, and one of Mr. Stearns's oldest and most intimate friends. The remains were buried at Blossom Hill Cemetery.

FUNERAL ADDRESS.

BY REV. AUGUSTUS WOODBURY, OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

When we are brought face to face with death, as it occurs in the circle of our home or of our friendship, we find ourselves asking the old question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" It has been asked for centuries. The heart asks it, as it feels its desolation. The mind asks it, as it looks over the wide field of life, and sees here and there men and women, young and old, the happy and the sorrowing, pass away from the scene of active existence. Is this all that we have? Are these warm affections forever quenched? Are these high ambitions wholly stifled? Shall these aspirations, which seek the loftiest summits, be doomed to eternal disappointment? Will these needs of the spirit, which demand better and more lasting things than any which earth can furnish, never come to their full supply? We cannot believe it. Here are uncompleted plans and unsatisfied desires. One day we are full of joy and active, vigorous life, looking forward and reaching forward to large attainments of being, full of a generous enthusiasm in our work and a spirit of faithfulness in our duty, believing that our work and our duty are accomplishing good results. The next day we are stricken with disease and marked by death, our plans miscarrying, our work interrupted, our duty left unfinished. Is this the end? Ah!

our hearts answer us that it is not the end. Love does not thus lose its object. The promise of life is not thus left to disappointment. It would be cruel to create beings, whose best and highest desires seek for things beyond this earth and time, and whose hearts and souls cry out for God and heaven and immortality, and leave them the victims of such a delusion. Craving the fulness of the future, and really needing the heavenly atmosphere in which to unfold our best powers and to grow the best fruits of life, we feel assured that the craving and the need will be supplied. Even our disappointments teach us of a satisfaction somewhere, and our failures become the testimony to a complete success in some higher sphere of life.

The Italian poet, Dante, in some of his writings, has an illustration of a traveller looking forward at almost every stage of his journey to find an inn, thinking that every house he sees upon the road may be his resting-place, but still compelled to go farther on, as he ascertains that no one of these is the end of his journey and the point of his destination. So are we but travellers and pilgrims on this earthly journey; and as we go on, our hearts are disappointed in the anticipation of having a place to rest here or there, and a home in this place or in that, because there is no real home for our souls anywhere but in the eternal mansions of our Father's house on high. How much we have to learn of the life to come, from the incompleteness of the life that now is! Nature joins with revelation in telling us of a home beyond the skies.

Our successes, too,—are there not some lessons to learn from them? Who ever was fully satisfied with what he has accomplished here? What high and generous soul has ever felt that it has done as well and as faithfully as it was capable of doing? Even when it has done its best, there still is the feeling that there is something better challenging its endeavor and inviting its effort. It has not yet done its worthiest. There are more and greater things to

be attained. There are loftier heights to reach. There is the consciousness that the nature, with which God has gifted his children, is capable of a larger and better life than this which we call earthly. And then our hopes,—what do they suggest? The sweetest element of life, next to the love which stands at the head of all our being, is hope. It is the joy of the happy, as they look forward to even brighter scenes. It dries the mourner's tear, as it calls up the view of reunited hearts in a home into which pain and sickness and death cannot enter. It is like the sun, dispersing all the clouds that overshadow the life. It is the brightness of the divine glory, shining in upon the darkness of human life.

"Hope is comfort in distress;
Hope is in misfortune bliss;
Hope in sorrow is delight;
Hope is day in darkest night;
Hope casts anchor upward where
Storms durst never domineer:
Trust, and hope will welcome thee
From storms to full security."

Thus our aspirations, our desires, our ambitions, our defeats, our successes, our hopes, all unite in helping us to answer the question which has vexed the human mind through all these centuries. And then to these is added the sublime word of revelation: "I am the resurrection and the life," saith the Lord Jesus; "he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "For we know," saith Paul the Apostle, "that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "This corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Is not the question answered? "If a man die, shall he live again?" Surely he shall live. He shall live upon the earth in all happy, tender memories of his true and faithful life. He shall live in the work he has

done, in the increase of good which he has wrought. He shall live in the influence which the thought of his life shall exert through many years to come. He shall live in the hopes which the divine love excites, that after a little while we shall see him again, and then no one shall take away our joy. "The memorial of virtue is immortal," says one of the old writers. Character has an immortality upon the earth, and every good man lives in the lives of his fellow-men, made better and stronger by his faithfulness. "Shall he live again?" Surely shall he live again in the heavenly state, going on to new attainments, perpetually reaching forward to new perfections. An immortal memorial on earth—an everlasting growth of the spirit in heaven! Are we to mourn our friend to whom such a rich blessing has been vouchsafed?

Death is no curse, but a step in advance to those who pass from earth. The rupture of the bonds which here unite friendly and congenial souls causes pain. It is natural. But there are bonds which death cannot break. As, when a friend goes to the other side of the world, he takes our affections and thoughts with him, so, when a friend goes to the other side of the grave, he carries with him a part of ourselves. It is finely said of Motley, that the death of his wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, "removed the centre of his thought to a new world," and changed his "point of view of the whole course and relation of things." Surely, an event which has an effect like that upon those who are left behind cannot be a curse, because it tends to elevate and purify the affections, and give to life a more sacred character. Where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. If the treasure of our love is in heaven, will not our hearts be there? The sense of bereavement will still remain, but our hope and love take from it its bitterness and sting. Nor can death be a curse to those whom it removes from scenes of earthly activity, for it introduces them into new and higher spheres of being, and sets them

forward on a life of ever-advancing goodness and ever-growing virtue. Will they be so far advanced as not to know us, when we, too, shall pass from death to life? Then let us be careful that we on earth keep pace with them in heaven!

In such a frame of mind and spirit we would come to-day to this service of love. We do not grieve for our friend, whose face we have looked on for the last time in life, as those who mourn without hope. We recognize the worth of the life that he has lived. We rejoice in the rich legacy of virtue and genuine manhood which he has bequeathed to us. The wealth of a high character is better than houses and lands; and the benefit of a fine example of true success in life is better than any which the acquisition of earthly riches can give. Our friend has done his life-work with a rare fidelity and thoroughness, neglecting nothing and forgetting nothing; carrying in his mind all the varied interests of church, home, friendship, business; and doing with his hand what his clear thought and kind heart directed him to do. "He liveth long who liveth well." Surely he has had a long life, crowded with kindnesses for his friends and useful labors for his fellow-men. Now that he has passed from "this bank and shoal of time," there are thousands who will say that a good man has gone to his reward.

I need not recount the story of Gov. Stearns's life in its details. Since he has been identified with the interests of this state, his career has been familiar to all its citizens; and to-day I doubt if there is one who will seek to find a stain upon the fair and honorable record of his life. He came here comparatively unknown, except within the circle of a special occupation. But he was known there for great native ability, and for the power of a clear and sagacious judgment of men and affairs. His early advantages were only those which belong to a majority of New England boys, receiving the instruction of the common-schools of the period. The summer was devoted to labor, and the winter gave

leisure for study. The opportunity was all the more valued because the time was brief; and that the youth made good use of his time, the success of the man amply proved. With a love for out-door work, he very early in his life—leaving his home in Billerica, Mass., at the age of eighteen—engaged in the business of railway construction, which was then opening a new field for enterprise and adventure. This business gradually made its way into New Hampshire, hindered at first by a reasonable fear of corporation influence, but accepted at last as a necessity for communication and as a means of prosperity. In the flush of his manhood he came here and established his home. In that home he has continued to live, steadily acquiring a competence, and winning his way, step by step, to public confidence; surrounding himself with warm and devoted friends, exercising a generous hospitality, and ready at all times, with an encouraging word and a kindly help, to do a favor, to give wise counsel, and to aid those who were struggling forward in the line in which he had himself won fortune and distinction. Many a young man,—not here alone, but in different parts of the country, and even beyond the sea,—must acknowledge his obligations to our friend for timely assistance, and will drop a grateful tear to his memory. If many hearts have been saddened by the intelligence of his death, many hearts will be glad that he has lived thus long and well.

Mr. Stearns loved work. I think he loved it for its own sake. Perhaps he loved it too well, for even the hours of his recreation had also their duties. He was scarcely, if ever, idle. He had no satisfaction except in the laborious performance of his duty. Friends would remonstrate with him and predict that he would break down beneath the burden, but till within a few years it seemed as though he were incapable of fatigue. Not content with carrying a burden such as the strongest would think sufficient for their strength, he would insist upon

taking more upon his broad shoulders. Even through his hours of sickness his mind was still active, and his hand reached forth to execute his plans of usefulness and good. Yet he did not hurry. He always had time to give a word of greeting to a friend ; patience to hear the thousand and one cases that came to him for judgment, even to the slightest details ; a considerate thoughtfulness to the needs of distant friends ; and a faithful discharge of every trust connected with the administration of the estates of his wards. Nor did he fritter away his time in useless occupations. No hour was wasted ; he was busy to the very last.

With all this multiplicity of business, our friend had a great executive capacity. There are many persons who lead busy lives, and are found engaged in many occupations, but, upon questioning them and examining their career, you find that they fail to grasp the real compass and character of the work in which they are employed. It was not so with our friend. Every detail of his various trusts was familiar to him. The facts were all stored away, each in its proper place, and ready to his tongue and hand. With an excellent judgment of men, he knew where to find the proper person to do the special work which he had decided upon accomplishing. In the chosen vocation of his life this was especially marked. Of course there are those who would say that he had his favorites, but there are none who would say that those favorites were not well chosen. He would not give, even to a friend, a position for which that friend was not suited. Knowing his men, he placed them where he knew they would be most useful and most efficient. Those whom he employed, and those whom he served, unite to-day in the acknowledgment of the clearness of his judgment.

When Mr. Stearns was called to be governor of the state, this executive ability of his came into requisition in the administration of affairs. It was a judicious, an able, an economical, and an honorable administration. In his messages

and his public addresses he maintained the dignity of his office and the credit of the state. Always calm, sensible, terse, and to the point, although without the graces of oratory or the display of rhetoric, they were so much a part of the man as to be natural and just. In the management of the state's finances he was of course successful. In general affairs he was so equitable as to be free from the acerbities of partisan feeling, and safe from the violence of partisan attack. Perhaps the chief act of his administration, and one which may not have been so much appreciated as it ought to be, was the reform which he instituted and carried through in the management of the state prison. I have occasion to know that his plans were carefully and conscientiously studied before they were carried into execution. The result has justified their wisdom, and there is no one now who would think of going back to the old system, so liable as it was to be perverted to bad uses and evil ends.

It is hardly my province to speak of Mr. Stearns's connection with this religious society. It belongs rather to his immediate pastor, who in due time will utter his word of grateful appreciation. But I cannot pass by this point without pausing, for a single moment, to allude at least to the constant interest he has shown and the generous support he has given here. Conservative, yet liberal in his theology, he was always strong in his convictions of the Christian truth. Always a good parishioner, each successive pastor has experienced his kindness; or, if at any time there may have been a difference, each successive pastor knew that it arose from a just and conscientious devotion to the interests of the society and the good of the church. His hand was always open and his heart was always warm to the aid and sustenance of this religious enterprise. It owes him much; and those who worship here will long mourn the absence of the "good gray head that all men knew."

Withal, our friend was a thoroughly New Hampshire man. Though not a "native here, and to the manner born," he had yet lived here so long as to be fully imbued with the spirit of the people and their institutions. A sturdy independence and integrity, a careful thrift, a clearness of intellectual insight, a quiet, unpretending demeanor, a steady firmness of principle and purpose, are the best characteristics of New Hampshire men and women. The people, like the hills, are steadfast and true, positive in their standing, and rooted to the centre of things. That strong, hard, rugged face, that looks down the valley from your mountain-top, may well be taken for the type. But, within the ruggedness and the hardness of outline and exterior, there are, as I know full well, warm hearts, beating true in their pulsations to the love of justice, liberty, and truth. It became natural to our friend to take a lively interest in all that pertained to the welfare of his adopted state. When urged to change his residence to another and more convenient point, that he might be free from the fatigues of his frequent journeys to Boston, his reply was, "No; I have cast in my part and lot with the people of New Hampshire. They have honored me with their confidence. My time and strength shall be theirs while I live." And so he came here and lived among you, and died in the midst of you, a true, devoted, public-spirited citizen, always faithful, and always ready to spend and be spent in your service.

Thus far I have spoken of our friend mostly as a public man. But with him private virtue and public spirit were very closely linked together. It is not even for me to lift the veil which guards the sacred precincts of home and private friendship. But this much I can say, that he was always true, constant, and sincere. There was not one phase of life for the public, and another for the family and the neighborhood. He was the same always—as careful and painstaking to see that all the details of home-life were made as they ought to be, for the comfort of those he loved, as he was that all the details of his business should

be arranged for the best interests of those whom he served. How generous was his hospitality! It was his fortune to have had as guests at different times two Presidents of the United States; and he spared no labor, even when weakened by sickness, to make the visit a continual enjoyment. But his care and attention were given to the humblest guest as well, to see that none should lack whatever courtesy and considerateness could afford. And what thoughtfulness he exercised in a thousand ways, all who knew him can amply testify.

Shall I speak of personal traits?—of that persistence of purpose, which often silently, but always steadily, carried to completion the plan he had settled in his mind?—of that strength of will which in his season of health gave him a powerful influence for good in the community, and which, when sickness came, contended manfully against the progress of the insidious disease that was sapping his strength, refusing to yield until the vigor of the body was completely gone?—of that warmth and tenderness of affection which endeared him to his immediate kindred and to his large circle of friends?—of that constancy of mind and heart which made him true and faithful in every relation of life? All these, and more, will be gratefully remembered by us all, as his name will be to us, as long as we live, the synonyme of manliness, fidelity, and virtue.

Thus he has lived, and thus he has died. Reticent on religious subjects, he sometimes gave to his intimate friends a glimpse of his interior life. His beliefs were positive, and his faith in God and immortality and the truth of Christ was deep and abiding. But his religion was more of deeds than of words, and more of practice than of profession. He bore his weaknesses and pains with a patient and cheerful heart, and he looked forward to the hour of death without a doubt or fear. So, when the time came, he sank away quietly to sleep, and entered into his immortal rest. Our prayers are for ourselves, our hopes for him. To him, and to all beyond the river, be peace forevermore!

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE.

Extract from a Discourse preached in the Unitarian church in Concord, N. H., Jan. 12, 1879,

BY THE PASTOR, REV. SAMUEL C. BEANE.

THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY, AND THE LUST THEREOF, BUT HE THAT DOETH THE WILL OF GOD ABIDETH FOREVER.

I JOHN ii, 17.

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How varied and manifold was that busy life to which our community and the state, and so many of the important interests of New England, have just paid their grateful tribute! It is bewildering even to read from the public press of the succession and involution of cares and enterprises which he not only took upon himself, but which, for the most part, were laid upon him for his superior ability, and all of which he carried bravely and persistently to or towards success. Possibly no American citizen,—not even a chief executive of the republic,—has ever had, at one time, a greater complexity of duties, both comprehensive and minute,—both reaching far and descending to the smallest details,—than had this quiet, unobtrusive, and calm-minded man, who was our neighbor and fellow-worshipper. And the combined sagacity and fidelity with which he executed all trusts, with so little unfavorable criticism of his skill, and so infrequent suspicion of his motives, are well-nigh marvellous in these days of popular distrust and partisan disparagement.

To estimate such a life, in its purely intellectual qualities, is quite beyond the power of those who have not had large occasion to use such qualities, or to feel the need of them. Certainly no man could have less of the conceit of genius

than had our ex-governor. Some one, however, has defined genius as "the infinite capacity for taking pains," and in this meaning, surely, our friend fitted the name. Sir William Hamilton declares that each and every step of knowledge and intellectual gain is in itself short and easy, and that the mental path from this to that is in every instance as simple as the advance from the first letter of the alphabet to the second. So that, given an average mind, faithful patience does all the rest. But what an herculean patience must be required in a youth, who, with no special schooling or social advantages for prestige, begins in total ignorance of a great calling, and makes his way from its foundation to its commanding heights!

In those large business ventures and trusts, no brilliant general knowledge can meet the need: each grade and item of the work must be learned,—slowly, practically, and in its wide ramifications. And, let me add, no mere ambition, divorced from fidelity, from honor, and from conscience, can achieve so great and varied results, without some fatal flaw which shall spoil the whole.

Again: our friend's pursuits were in themselves useful, honorable, and in the necessary line of human advancement and civilization. Not a stroke of such labor is lost: if well done, it is all wrought into the vast system of social welfare. Human intercourse, rapid transit, the interchange of the products of farm and factory, the binding together of sections of the country, the development of unimproved districts, and the equalizing of social advantages,—there is no better vocation to which to give one's energies and talents.

It was fitting that he who had shown such ability for organizing and executing large plans, should be called to the legislature, and to the highest office of the state. Such advancements are in accord with the true social and civil service, and with the parable of him who, having been faithful over one city, was made ruler over ten. From no citizen have I heard the first intimation that those years in which

you conferred upon him your highest honors, were not years of faithfulness, dignity, and economy, and characterized by the purpose and the will to correct all mistakes, reform abuses, and impart the best wisdom of private thrift to the affairs of the commonwealth.

"It is required of stewards," says an apostle, "that they be found faithful;" and he might have added another requirement, involved in the first, and no less important, namely, that they demand faithfulness in others. If ever the discipline of the martinet is both excusable and requisite, it is in such works as involve the comfort, the safety, and the very lives of the people. Irksome, at first, it may be, both to him who is in authority, and to those who serve, but as righteous and merciful in the large account as are those strict laws of God which hem us in by a hair's-breadth, and make every transgression or neglect a loss and a torture. Our friend was a severe disciplinarian, requiring that all work should be done to the utmost letter of the obligation, each hour to be filled full of its expected accomplishment, each joint and nail to serve its strong and durable purpose, and each word to be a simple yea or nay, without that half-promise or that excess of affirmation, which, as the Master says, comes from evil. Of course this discipline, or, rather, regimen, like all best things, may be carried to an extreme; but as I listen to the thankful testimony of the well-trained workmen who by our friend were educated for responsible positions in this severe school, and when I see how strong and unimpeachable stand to-day the important works to which his hands and theirs were given, I am convinced that he was one of America's best teachers of the lessons which we, as a people, need to have written in fire before our eyes,—of the wickedness of loose obligations and meretricious labor, of the adulterations of human life and work; and that, if we would outdo the other nations in the high industries, we must excel them in patient faithfulness, in an honest conscience, and in the nicer balance of

accounts between man and man. But by the confession of all, underneath the school-master and the taskmaster, there was a delicate and tender and just appreciativeness, which praised every good endeavor, gave bounty to signal desert, and made each faithful man a friend and brother.

It could hardly be expected that a man, so taxed on every side and in every faculty by the demands of his secular vocations, should be also a practical leader in the social, moral, and religious enterprises of the day. Indeed, all the hours one can spare from his home under such circumstances, all the life of his conscience, and all the Christian faith and purpose that are possible to him, may be devoted, without waste or shortcoming, to those immense duties and obligations which, as in our friend's case, were enough to absorb two or three minds instead of one.

It was a surprise to me, not that he gave no more, but that he could find the will and leisure to give so much, of care to these other and sublime concerns. Indeed, to what good cause,—to what charity or public improvement,—were not his influence and support given ?

As a member of this religious society he was a pillar of strength, upon whom we all depended, and with such confidence! A generous contributor of his ample means, and a constant worshipper, he was also a ready and happy attendant upon our social meetings, where in democratic fraternity he knew all and cared for all; and, even to the minutest incident of our church life, he was constantly informed and always interested. From my few conversations with him upon the subject, I learned that if there were anything which he believed in more than financial principles, more than party platforms, more than any institution or polity, it was that liberal Christianity which he would make the power and joy of every life, as it was of his own. From the humblest church duty to the officership of our National Conference, he told his creed, his hope, and his faith, as a glad and unshrinking witness.

It was a joy to see that, until the very end, no good affection or concern of his life was wasted or weakened by disease. During the hours just preceding Christmas,—which were almost the last hours of clear consciousness,—he was busy, in spite of his fatal and fast-increasing malady, in remembering the usual objects of his annual beneficence, and in adding new names to the list.

Friends, there is no death, nor even a magic and transforming change, in such a man's departure. What would heaven be to him, without labor still for every faculty, without care and sympathy, without the thought of us? He is simply lifted up, freed, and made more truly himself. Ours the only fault, if he does not live with us, in us, and through us,—if, with him and by his side, we do not now work with renewed labor and self-sacrifice for the things he loved so much.

He still does and must fill his own place. His name is not obliterated, but freshly written, and with illuminated letters, upon our record. If we will, he has but just begun to live to us.

Not as a saint by specialty, not as a pale spirit that made holiness a calling apart from the world's work, but as a man of flesh and blood, of understanding and sagacity, of a sound conscience and a firm but gentle heart, who did his full share in leavening the secular industries and relations about us with the leaven of the kingdom of heaven,—thus do we regard and cherish him to-day. So

> "——— we but die to live;
> It is from death we 're flying;
> Forever lives our life;
> For us there is no dying.
> We die but as the spring-bud dies,
> In summer's golden glow to rise.
> These be our days of April bloom,
> Our July is beyond the tomb."